

Fitting & Sewing a Western Shirt

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Preparations - Prewash all fabric in hot water with detergent and dry thoroughly in a hot dryer. This removes excess dye and sizing and shrinks the fabric. Shrink all trims by placing them in a bag and washing, or put them in a glass dish with water and microwave. Lay interfacing in the bathtub and barely cover it with hot water. Let the interfacing rest until the water is cold. Press between towels and lay out to dry on the table overnight. Press the fabric before cutting; careful not to press in a center crease. Press trim gently, do not pull or tug on it to straighten, or it will get stretched out again.

Fitting - Why bother making a shirt if it isn't better than something mass-produced?

Materials - pattern, fusible quilters grid, pattern paper, measuring tape, markers, and rulers.

Measure at the Adam's Apple and add ½ inch. Make a practice collar band.

Starts at the Collar - Collar size is not given on all shirt patterns. Use the following chart to determine the man's pattern size from the neck measurement. If it is a multi-size pattern, it is the larger size.

Purchase the pattern by neck measurement only. This is the most critical fitting point. All other parts of the pattern can be easily adjusted. ***Patterns are designed for men of the average built height of 5'10".***

Suggested Patterns - These patterns were chosen because they have a separate collar stand and are front-facing.

McCalls 6044 - sizes S, M & L and 1XL, 2XL & 3XL - Download - <https://somethingdelightful.com>
Folkwear - 212

Body Measurements - These are given for reference.

Chest - measure around the fullest part of the chest just below the armpits.

Waist - measure at the natural waistline above the hip bones. Keep the tape parallel to the floor all the way around. Most men do not wear their pants on their waists.

Shoulder - measure from the base of the neck to the shoulder pivot point.

Arm Length - with the arm bent at a right angle, measure from the shoulder pivot point to the wrist bone going over the elbow. Remember to consider cuff width when planning sleeve length.

Sleeve Size - This is a ready-to-wear measurement. With the arm bent at a right angle, measure from the neck bone to the shoulder pivot point and continue around the elbow to the wrist bone.

Back Width - measure between the shoulder seam lines.

Height - All men's patterns are designed for 5 foot 10 inches.

Chest & pattern size	50	52 2XL	54	56 3XL	58	60 4XL	62	64 5XL
Neck	18	18 ½	19	19 ½	20	20 ½	21	21 ½
Waist	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60
Shoulder	7 ⅛	7 ¼	7 ⅜	7 ½	7 ⅝	7¾	7 ⅞	8
Arm Length	25 ⅝	25 ⅞	26 ⅛	26 ⅜	26 ⅝	26 ⅞	27 ⅛	27 ⅜
Sleeve Size	35	35	35	36	36	36	36	36
Back Width	20	20 ½	21	21 ½	22	22 ½	23	23 ½

Chest & pattern size	34	36 Small	38	40 Medium	42	44 Large	46	48 1XL
Neck	14	14 ½	15	15 ½	16	16 ½	17	17 ½
Waist	28	30	32	34	36	39	42	44
Shoulder	6 ⅛	6 ¼	6 ⅜	6 ½	6 ⅝	6 ¾	6 ⅞	7
Arm Length	23 ⅝	23 ⅞	24 ⅛	24 ⅜	24 ⅝	24 ⅞	25 ⅛	25 ⅜
Sleeve Size	32	32	33	33	34	34	35	35
Back Width	16	16 ½	17	17 ½	18	18 ½	19	19 ½

Prepare the Pattern

Tile the pattern together. Trace the pattern out of pattern paper—Mark the 5/8 inch seam allowance on all pieces.

DO NOT TOUCH - Center front, center back, or neckline.

Fudge factor side seams - Add 1 inch to the front and backside seams. On both sides of the sleeve, the stitching adds 1 inch at the underarm tapering to the wrist seam. Fabric effects fit. Excess can be cut later.

Length adjustment - The front may need to be longer than the back to go over the tummy.

Baste the stitching lines on the pattern - **ALL Stitching MUST be 5/8 inch seams.**

Sew shoulders with wrong sides together and **clip** neck curve

Try on - T-shirt & necklace - pins & tape. The man must be standing.

Fitting changes Start at the top and work down - Back then the front. Changes must be made in the center of the pattern. Adding to the seam allowances will not change the pattern where needed.

Rounded back - affects the neckline and shoulder fit. This is a natural variation in bone structure.

Shoulder slope - Shirts are designed to fit a clothes hanger. If his shoulders are different from a clothes hanger, the shirt must be changed. Do not change the neck edges; this will affect the top of the sleeve.

Shoulder length - from the neck chain to the shoulder point.

Broad back (rounded back) & hip room -

Broad chest & tummy room -

Underarm Seam - will affect sleeve seam. This is the last seam to be sewn

Sleeve length - With the cuff unbuttoned, the edge of the cuff should cross the middle of the back of the hand.

Cuff Changes - Make a practice cuff or measure a well-fitting cuff.

Interfacing - Pellon 906 - Collar - Collar stand - Front placket - cuffs - sleeve plackets

Heat - Steam - Pressure - Time - Press once & cut once.

Sewing Instructions

new needle Universal 90/14 - **fresh thread** - **set tension**

Collar - stitch - trim - clip - understitch - sew ends - trim - clip - turn - topstitch -

Collar stand -

Cuffs - Stitch - trim - clip - understitch - baste - glue press

Shoulders - sew - fuse web - shoulder support

Yoke - Appliqué - anything goes - Pockets - part of the yoke

Neckline stitching - ½ inch from the line - *required* - clipping - *required*

Front band - baste - glue press - sew - the trim band only- fold - glue press - topstitch

Snap - Snap Tape Measure - Snap Source - www.snapsource.com

Back collar stand - trim and press

Collar and inside collar stand - attach using a template and trim

Edgestitch - increase stitch length

Side seams - final fitting

Sleeve Placket instructions

Sleeve seams - final fitting

Cuff attachment - Trim seams remove bulk to help snaps.

Bottom edge - Adjust & Hem

SHIRTMaking - by David Page Coffin, a fascinating and well-written book, and his article - **Threads Magazine** #67 Oct/Nov 1996. If you wish to know more about shirt making, I highly recommend this book and writing.

